

REMARKS

Claims 1, 21 and 41 have been amended. Claim 13 has been canceled without prejudice.

The Examiner has rejected applicants' claims 1-3, 6-9, 21 and 41 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over the Kirani, et al. (U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2002/0016818) reference. The Examiner has rejected applicants' claims 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kirani, et al. reference in view of the Barber (U.S. Patent No. 5,930,777) patent. With respect to applicants' claims, as amended, the Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' independent claims 1, 21 and 41 have been amended to better define applicants' invention. Particularly, applicants' independent claim 1 has been amended to include the features of dependent claim 13 which has been deleted. Claim 1 now recites as follows:

1. An information providing apparatus capable of executing a communication via a network, comprising:

registering means for registering one or more terminal and permission/inhibition of charge, for each user;

reception means for receiving transmission information to a user from an external terminal;

decision means for deciding, from the one or more terminal registered for the user by said registering means, a destination terminal of the transmission information received by said reception means;

selection means for selecting a conversion module which converts a format of the transmission information into a format which matches processing ability of the decided destination terminal;

designation means for sending the transmission information to the selected conversion module so as to make the selected

conversion module convert the transmission information; and transferring means for transferring the converted transmission information to the decided destination terminal; and inhibiting means for, when a user sets to inhibit charge, inhibiting said selection means from selecting conversion module which accrues charge.

Applicants' independent claims 21 and 41 have been similarly amended.

The Examiner has acknowledged that the Kirani, et al. reference does not disclose "inhibiting means for, when a user sets to inhibit charge, inhibiting said selection module from selecting a conversion module which accrues charge." However, the Examiner argues that this feature is disclosed in the Barber patent and that the combined teachings of the Kirani et al. reference and the Barber patent would result in applicants' claimed invention.

Applicants disagree. The Barber patent merely teaches a system in which a user can access a document on the world wide web and the document may contain links which the user can click on to access a related document. The patent also teaches that a link can be tokenized in which case not only will the user gain access to a related document when clicking on the link, but the user will also charged a fee payable to a vendor.

The Barber patent thus simply teaches tokenized links in documents which cause a user clicking on a tokenized link in a document to be charged a fee. However, there is no description in the patent of selecting a conversion module which converts a format of information into a format which matches the processing capability of a destination, nor can there thus be any description of a when a user inhibits charging, inhibiting the selecting means from selecting a conversion module which accrues charge. In point of fact, contrary to the Examiner's statement, there is no teaching in the Barber patent of a "charging means for, when

said conversion module executes conversion which accrues charge, executing charge processing."

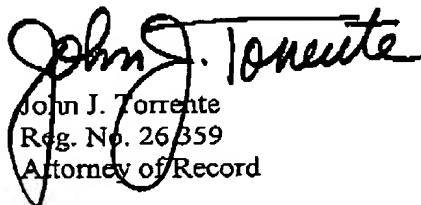
Moreover, even assuming, arguendo, that the teachings of the Barber patent could be somehow viewed with the Kirani, et al. reference, the result would be a system in which tokenized links in documents are used to accrue charges to a user. There is simply nothing in either reference to teach or suggest that when a user inhibits charging, inhibiting a selecting means from selecting a conversion module which accrues charge. In the system of the combined references, a user inhibits charging by selecting a non-tokenized link, but there no inhibiting of a selecting means from selecting a conversion module which converts a format of a transmission information into a format which matches processing ability of a decided destination terminal and which accrues charge.

Applicants' amended independent claims 1, 21 and 41, and their respective dependent claims, all of which recite such features, thus patentably distinguish over the teachings of the Kirani, et al. reference and the Barber patent.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicants' claims, as amended, patentably distinguish over the cited art of record. Accordingly, reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,


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